

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

New Claims 42-50 are presented herein. Accordingly, Claims 32-50 are pending for examination.

Applicants request acknowledgement of the claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119. The certified copy of the priority document was filed in the parent application.

Applicants have provided a new title as required. Further, Applicants have amended Claim 38 to correct the inconsistency noted in the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's careful review of the claims.

Without acceding to the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), independent Claims 32 and 35 have been amended more specifically to recite certain distinctive features of the invention. At least as presently amended, Claims 32 and 35 distinguish patentably from U.S. Patent No. 6,417,037 to Shimizu et al. (Shimizu), which constitutes the basis of the outstanding rejection.

Claim 32 sets forth a method of manufacturing a semiconductor integrated circuit device, in which two or more element forming regions are formed over a surface

portion of a semiconductor substrate and defined by an insulating film. The element forming regions each extend in a first direction and are arranged in a second direction perpendicular to the first direction. A plurality of memory cells are formed over main surfaces of the element forming regions. A conductive film is formed over the semiconductor substrate and has a first portion which extends in the first direction along a first side of the substrate surface portion over which the element forming regions are formed. A second portion of the conductive film extends in the second direction along a second side of the substrate surface portion, and the element forming regions have end portions positioned below the second portion of the conductive film (see, for example, Fig. 1 of Applicants' drawings).

Independent Claim 35 more broadly recites an arrangement in which a conductive film is formed over the semiconductor substrate and has at least a portion extending in the second direction, with the element forming regions having end portions positioned below that portion of the conductive film.

It is apparent that Shimizu fails to teach or suggest the aforementioned features of the Applicants' invention, specifically, the arrangement of the conductive film in

relation to the element forming regions in general, as well as the end portions of the element forming regions in particular.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn, and that Claims 32 and 35 be allowed.

Claim 38 has been further amended to set forth that the element forming regions extend in a first direction and that the conductive film has at least a portion extending in a second direction, perpendicular to the first direction, and disposed over end portions of the element forming regions.

Shimizu neither teaches nor suggests a structure having the aforementioned features of Claim 38.

New Claims 42-50 have been added to provide more comprehensive protection for certain aspects of Applicants' invention. Among the newly added claims, Claim 47 is independent.

New independent Claim 47 sets forth a method of forming an integrated circuit device in which a conductive film is formed having a first portion which extends in a first direction along a first side of a substrate surface portion over which two or more element forming regions are formed. The conductive film also has a second portion which extends in a second direction, perpendicular to the first

direction, along a second side of the substrate surface portion. The second portion of the conductive film is disposed over end portions of the element forming regions. Clearly, Shimizu does not teach or suggest this arrangement.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance and should now be passed to issue.

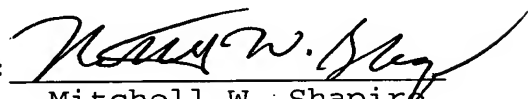
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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